

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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MARKEY SEEKS IMPROVEMENTS IN ROLLER COASTER RIDE SAFETY REGULATION

Lawmaker wants loophole closed which exempts theme park rides

Washington, DC: Rep. Edward Markey (D-MA), ranking Democrat on the House Consumer Protection subcommittee, announced today that he intends to file legislation next week that would close a loophole in federal safety regulation of amusement park rides. His bill would ensure that rides such as roller coasters (so-called "fixed-location" rides) are not exempt from the oversight, inspection and enforcement authority of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

"The tragic deaths that occurred on rides in three different parks at the end of August have focused public attention on the dangers that can accompany these rides," said Markey. "It seems as if the industry is testing the limits of technology and human endurance with every new ride. Some of these rides now reach speeds of 100 mile per hour and forces greater than astronauts are trained to endure on the Space Shuttle. As these rides get higher, faster, and more technologically sophisticated, the potential for unforeseen catastrophe rises as well. We need to ensure that our capacity to protect against unreasonable risks is not outstripped by our desire to experience new thrills," Markey noted.

Rep. Markey has also sent a letter to the chair of the Consumer Product Safety Commission seeking answers regarding the current state of safety regulation of amusement park rides. The letter is available by calling 202 225 2836.

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